

297. Opening of a sea-port at Vizhinjam.

Mr. S. Swamy Iyengar suggested that a port might be opened at Vizhinjam and the present canal from Vallakadavu to Thiruvallam extended to that place.

Reply.—Vizhinjam is a port at present, but the business transacted there is very meagre. The question of opening a road from the terminus of the water communication at the mouth of the Karamana river to Vizhinjam is under investigation.

298. Town fund.

Mr. V. A. Ramakrishna Iyer B. A., B. L. (T. I. C., Trivandrum) observed that the town fund had hitherto been entirely allotted by His Highness the Maha Rajah's Government. When some years back Trivandrum was constituted a municipality and its administration came to be conducted and controlled by a Regulation, Government began to contribute still more to the town fund. The original Regulation was amended in 1076 when a provision was inserted by which Government bound themselves to contribute in future not less than the minimum contributed in the year preceding. It was observed in regard to this provision by the late Mr. Thanu Pillai that, unlike the other service heads the annual allotments under which were increased or cut down according to the varying conditions of the finances, a statutory prohibition was imposed on Government from applying the shears on the town improvement grant under any circumstances while no maximum limit of allotment was fixed or even contemplated. Reading this provision in the letter and in the spirit, it certainly meant that, while the minimum limit could not be reduced, Government were expected to increase that limit in proportion to the growing requirements of the town. As a matter of fact, however, the minimum had been the maximum all these years and the promise of a boundless grant had yet to be fulfilled. The annual allotment now stood at Rs. 32,000, or Rs. 3,000 less than the contribution made 7 years ago. About Rs. 29,000 out of this amount was being spent on the establishment alone. Thus, it would be clear that the amount available for expenditure on sanitary improvements was small and had been gradually becoming smaller and smaller. The time had therefore come for Government to bestow their earnest

attention on the question of augmenting the town fund and of thereby providing the men entrusted with the health and safety of the town with the means to conserve and protect them. Under section 83 of the Towns Conservancy and Improvement Regulation, the town fund could really be increased in several ways but at present none of those means except Government grant were availed of. Income was no doubt derived from some other items but all that was not placed as such at the disposal of the committee, over and above the budget allotment. The allotment made by Government had actually no reference to the receipts from the town. Looking into the figures, he found that, while Government had been receiving from the people about Rs. 4,000, they had been giving to them Rs. 36,000, or 9 times that amount in return, though considering the heavy establishment cost this could hardly be said to have hitherto served any useful purpose. To revert to his contention, both from the æsthetic and sanitary points of view it was necessary to possess a larger town fund. Trivandrum was not what it was a decade ago. It was now half a dozen years since the Regulation was passed and all this time the powers conferred by the Regulation for raising revenue had been virtually lying idle. That had of course a meaning of its own. A paternal Government had been naturally disinclined to impose additional burden on the people and the latter should feel thankful to the former if they continued to be relieved from it in future also. But, the member doubted whether, with the growing consciousness among the town residents of the advantages of proper sanitation and conservancy, they would grudge to contribute their mite towards the improvement of the town. In similar towns in other countries, it was the well-to-do classes that bore a due proportion of the burden. In Trivandrum, the mercantile, the professional and all other classes living in the town and earning money contributed nothing towards its upkeep. He thought that no one should grudge to bear his burden if it pleased the Government to call upon him to do so. The committee wanted money and were in urgent need of it. Government were therefore obliged either to allot them much more money than hitherto or to empower them to exercise the powers vested in them and raise the extra revenue contemplated by the Regulation. It would also behove Government to set apart and give to the Town Improvement Committee all incomes now derived in whatever shape from the town. They ought not to go into Government treasuries as Government revenue but should be handed over to the Committee from time to time.

Reply.—The ordinary requirements of the town are under present arrangements met from the annual budget allotment. The proposal for additional allotment being made by Government cannot be acceded to in the present state of the finances. As regards the alternative suggestion to raise municipal taxes to which the member referred, it rests with the Committee to take the initiative. The suggestions made by the member will be duly considered.

299. Water-supply for drainage purposes and the provision of latrines and urinals for the Trivandrum Town.

Mr. V. A. Ramakrishna Iyer B. A., B. L., said that this subject had been pressed by him last year also on the attention of Government. The Town Improvement Committee had so far back as 1896 discussed a motion from its President appealing to the Government for the introduction of water-supply to the town. The Committee again and again reminded Government of the necessity of supplying the town with good water. In his review of the Administration Report for 1911, Mr. James Thomson, the then Resident, observed that he had received an assurance from the Durbar that a project for water-supply would be matured shortly and in the order passed on that report by the Madras Government it was suggested that some decided steps might be taken in this important matter. Government had already replied that nothing could be done at present owing to financial considerations, but he would urge upon their attention another aspect of the question of water-supply. The masonry drains in the town which were being extended by the Public Works Department year after year and which could have been intended by that department only as rain-water drains had become in their present condition a source of standing nuisance and a serious menace to the health of the town. In the absence of regular flushing, these drains formed one continuous cess-pool of noxious exhalations and a breeding-house of mosquitoes and other insects which were now regarded as the chief carriers of epidemic diseases. This was a fact which could be bitterly realised by any one without any difficulty whatever. He had only to ask any man who doubted it to pass by the side of one of those drains and he was sure that he would never thank him for that visit. If such a state of the town drains were not taken immediate notice of, he was sure that it would prove a veritable danger to the